

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 16822 171918Z

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ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2869

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 16822

FOLG RECD AS CALCUTTA 2979 DTD DEC 17 1975 RPTD UR INFO.

QUOTE.

C O N F I D E N T I A L CALCUTTA 2979

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJ: ARREST OF BRITISH AND AUSTRALIAN ANANDA MARG

REF: NEW DELHI 13357; CALCUTTA 2430

1. DURING A SOCIAL FUNCTION DECEMBER 13, AUSTRALIAN CONOFF RYAN AND UK CONOFF PERROTT SEPARATELY UNBURDENED THEMSELVES TO CONOFF O'NEILL REGARDING THEIR RESPECTIVE CHARGES, ANANDA MARGIS COLBERT (AUSTRALIAN) AND WHITE (UK).

2. RYAN SAID THAT HE HAD VISITED COLBERT THREE TIMES, EACH TIME IN THE PRESENCE OF POLICE OFFICERS WHO ATTEMPTED (UNSUCCESSFULLY HE THINKS) TO MONITOR THEIR CONVERSATION. COLBERT TOLD RYAN THAT HE AND WHITE ARE SEGREGATED FROM MOST OF THE PRISONERS BUT IN ALL OTHER RESPECTS ARE BEING WELL TAKEN CARE OF. COLBERT IS IN GOOD HEALTH AND HOLDING UP WELL CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES. RYAN SAID THAT BOTH COLBERT AND WHITE ARE BEING HELD UNDER THE

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 16822 171918Z

DIR AND A CRIMINAL CHARGE OF ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE POLICE CUS-

TODY. RYAN IS OPTIMISTIC AND THINKS THAT BOTH WILL BE FREE BY
NEXT MONTH.

3. PERROTT STATED THAT HE HAS SEEN WHITE ONLY ONCE AND EVEN THAT
WAS ONLY AFTER THE UK HIGH COMMISSIONER INTERCEDED PERSONALLY
WITH THE CHIEF SECRETARY WHEN THE HC WAS IN CALCUTTA IN NOVEMBER.
PERROTT SAID THAT THE DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSION IS STILL HANDLING
THIS MATTER AS A CONSULAR CASE AND MAKING NO EXTRA EFFORTS TO
ASSIST WHITE. PERROTT HAS NO RPT NO IDEA WHEN THEY WILL COME TO
TRIAL, "IF EVER", AND UNLIKE RYAN FEELS THAT THIS WILL BE A
CASE THAT WILL DRAG ON FOR SOMETIME.

3. PERROTT SAID, CONFIDENTIALLY, THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVT. HAD
ADVISED AUSTRALIAN ANANDA MARGIS THAT IF THEY GOT IN TROUBLE IN
INDIA THEY CAN EXPECT NO RPT NO ASSISTANCE. PERROTT SAID HE
DIDN'T KNOW IF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVT. COULD HOLD TO THIS POSITION
BUT THOUGHT THAT IT WAS MEANT MORE TO SCARE AUSTRALIAN ANANDA
MARGIS AWAY FROM INDIA THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

4. COMMENT: IT WAS APPARENT FROM RYAN'S AND PERROTT'S REMARKS
THAT AUSTRALIAN AND UK OFFICIALS IN CALCUTTA ARE NOT RPT NOT
COORDINATING THEIR ACTIONS IN THIS MATTER. BOTH RYAN AND PERROTT
REQUESTED THAT THE INFORMATION THAT THEY HAD SEPARATELY PASSED
NOT RPT NOT BE SOURCED TO THEM IN ANY CONVERSATION WITH THEIR
RESPECTIVE HIGH COMMISSIONS IN NEW DELHI OR WITH ANYONE ELSE.
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